

## HSD UIR Meeting 12/15/03

- Kip Tokuda facilitated the meeting and introductions were made by all present.
- The previous two meetings in which Mickey Fearn and Patricia McInturff visited were recapped and copies of the minutes from the meetings were handed out.
- Kip shared stories about what institutional racism means to him and his hopes that we can begin to address is concretely here.
- Kim and Margery talked about the two one-day workshops that they helped to coordinate entitled “Confronting Racism in Social Services: A Workshop On Homelessness”.

The initial response was so overwhelming, with over 150 providers filling out applications that a second day was added. The workshops each had about 30-40 service providers and 5-10 community people or homeless folks. They were facilitated by Ron Chisom a co-founder of the People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond from New Orleans. Much of the workshop focus was on understanding how our agencies which we think are very helpful to people who are poor may actually be helping to keep them in poverty. There were opportunities for providers to hear community people share their experiences and the enthusiasm was high both days. The workshop group on day 1 created a strategy chart, which was handed out at the meeting. Since the workshops people have been meeting to discuss next steps. There have been 2 meetings and future meetings are planned for early January at the Boomtown Café. People from the HSD UIR group are strongly encouraged to be apart of this group.

- It was suggested that in the future we could perhaps partner with DON on workshops like these and tap into their funds matching resources.
- The question was raised about how we begin to bring this to the ground level in HSD, and it was suggested that each unit should go ahead and make UIR plans.
  - Points raised about this were:
    - we need to build relationships to change things not just change policy.
    - We can’t forget our community base. To truly be an anti-racist institution has to be an intentional collective decision.
    - Maybe we should be asking our units if they are committed rather than just making a plan?
- Martha, who was from United Way of King County, talked about similar struggles that their organization encounters.
- Another guest from the United Methodist Ministry spoke about her work there re-examining the church’s history especially in regards to their perpetuation of racism.
- It was stated that Mickey Fearn ought to be working in partnership with us and us with him, this would help to create a mutual exchange of information.

- The question was raised about what our goals were. It was responded that our goals are to be part of a transformative process committed to anti- racism, to make institutional change where the lines between the community and the institution are blurred and the services are profound in the lives of community people.
- A key question to keep in mind was “How is what we are doing serving to help communities use/find/utilize their own power? Or are we working against that?”
- It was pointed out there are 16 units in the department and 9 of them were represented. This means that if we all go talk with our units we can make a difference.
- It was further suggested that the leadership team make it an expectation of units.
- It was suggested that we work with our managers (when applicable) and invite them to meetings etc and we also need to start the conversation at the line staff level.

There will be no meeting December 29<sup>th</sup> the next meeting will be January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2004.